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THE "EQUAL RIGHTS" OF NATIONS

A CONCEPT that is old is therefore apparently wrong. A principle to be sound must be new. To quote from an ancient authority is simply to express a platitude. The Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Nations adopted by the American Institute of International Law, and printed in the March number of the *ADVOCATE OF PEACE*, is a "millstone about our neck." With these views, Mr. Edwin D. Dickinson, writing in the *New Republic* for February 26, proceeds to inform us that "an equality of rights and duties is impossible in any workable system of international law;" that "every one knows that independent States do not have equal rights and duties;" that "common sense should teach us that powers like Great Britain, Germany, and the United States will not and cannot allow Hayti, Persia, and Salvador an equal right with themselves in formulating and enforcing international law."

The *New Republic* probably excuses itself for printing such philosophy and such statements on the ground that it is a "journal of opinion." The success of such a journalistic enterprise may make it necessary to print no little amount of sophistry as a goad to writers of sanity, and to increase business.

Mr. Dickinson, employing the favorite device of arguers, criticises individual sentences and sections without regard to their setting. He asks: "Does it need to be suggested that equality before the law means one thing in the Dual Monarchy and quite another in the Dominion of Canada?" etc. The confusion in this writer's mind evidently lies in his inability to distinguish between *influence* and *rights*. Had he made this distinction it would not have been so necessary for him to emphasize his own superiority over Mr. Chief Justice Marshall and Lord Stowell. Influences vary, but the legal equality of persons and States before the law is questioned only by the Bernhardies, the Homer Leas, and their likes. We are all born into the world in the same way, and we all leave it in the same way. No reputable court in our western civilization would stand for the principle that birth, family relations, money, college degrees, red hair, or the cut of a man's waistcoat should make any difference in his standing before the law.

The writer has missed the point of the whole Declaration, namely, that nations are the creatures of law, and should be subordinated to law. That is the fundamental principle, because upon it depends all our hope for justice between States. The principle is not new, of course—not fresh and untested by the experience of centuries—but it is true and inviolable. It is not only imbedded in judicial decisions; it was the successful contention of President Theodore Roosevelt when he insisted that the big business of corporations should bow

to the same rules as the business of little men and women. It expresses the most fundamental belief and aspiration of our western world. To ignore this part of the Declaration is to ignore it all.

It is pathetic seriously to criticise any document with such puerile demands as that the last article should have been made the first. But for a man who can read to urge at such an hour in human history that "we are harping too much today upon the rights of nations," when the right of a nation to remain neutral is crushed, is worse. Furthermore, and still more serious, the critic has utterly overlooked that portion of the preamble which calls attention to the fact that the rights and duties of nations are, by virtue of membership in the society thereof, to be exercised and performed in accordance with the exigencies of *their mutual interdependence*, recognizing the solidarity which unites the members of the society of civilized nations. For a critic to ignore any section of this important document is serious, but to ignore this one in particular is inexcusable. As it was once pointed out, we think, by Lord Beaconsfield: "It is much easier to be critical than to be correct."

EDITORIAL NOTES

"Go Slow."

We are not sure that interested persons are lashing us into fear for purposes of profit. It is reasonable for us to assume, however, that any people whose interest it might be to increase expenditures for armaments in this country naturally favor the present campaign. If we in America submit to the plan proposed by the Navy General Board at the request, we are told, of the President, for the greatest navy of the world by 1925, it will mean an expenditure between now and then of \$1,500,000,000 for ships alone. It will mean a fixed annual expenditure upon the navy of \$760,000,000. If this pistol-toting philosophy prevails and this program is adopted, we in America, like the peoples of Europe heretofore, will be dwelling in a land mined throughout with dangerous explosives.

We should "go slow" because peace rests neither upon force nor upon fear. We have not been told what we should prepare for nor against whom we should prepare. It is undoubtedly true that this nation is less in danger of attack than ever before in its history. The lessons of this war are not yet clear. We should remember that the money necessary for extravagant increases in our military equipment must come from import duties, duties upon spirituous liquors, duties upon income taxes, or from bonds. Whether the money comes from one or all of these, it comes from the people in any event, and the real burden of it all will be, must be, borne by the poor.

We should go slow, because a growing military establishment in this country is but one ring in an endless chain. We prepare against Japan. Japan prepares against us. Russia prepares against Japan. Germany prepares against Russia, and so on around the world. We are being asked to repeat the European frenzy, and that in the name of "adequate defense," which we know to be a vague phrase applicable alike to all nations.

We should go slow, because we do not know that our present navy may not soon be the greatest navy in the world, and that without adding a cruiser. This certainly will be so if the German and English navy really meet.

Surely America need not go back to the philosophy of the tooth and claw. It is not necessary that we should tolerate in our midst a Moloch of might and madness. Nearly all of the half hundred preparedness programs for America are cheap swindles and outgrowths of a moral imbecility. We are being deluged with what Dr. Hardin recently called "damnable shibboleths coined in kings' houses and fostered in dying Europe by those who hate democracy."

Laughter and Prophecy.

"We are not respected—we are laughed at—in Europe because it is known that we do not dare to declare war on anything but a fourth-rate power." These are words attributed to W. Morgan Shuster, who predicts also an invasion of America, beginning with the bombardment of New York City, by European or Asiatic nations within five years. This is interesting information, as we had not thought of Europe as laughing at anything just now. It is in a measure comforting that there is any room left for laughter in Europe; but the reason given for this hilarity is still more interesting from the standpoint of a study in insanity. "We are not respected" because we "do not dare to declare war on anything but a fourth-rate power." That statement is illuminating. When we become brave enough to declare war on a third-rate power we shall be "respected." When our bravery expands, and we declare war against a second-rate power, we shall be renowned; and then, later, when we have thoroughly braced up and declared war against a first-rate power, we shall, of course, be revered. The process of attaining unto place and standing among the nations of the world has been greatly simplified by Mr. Shuster.

Mr. Shuster is a very wonderful person. He knows that the United States is to be invaded within five years. We wish we knew Mr. Shuster. We are interested to know whom the Democrats are to nominate at St. Louis and the Republicans at Chicago. We should like to know the amount Congress is going to assess upon us for additional guns and war vessels, and when our sala-

ries are going to be increased. Is the District of Columbia going dry this year? When will the women be allowed to vote the Tammany ticket? Who is to be President of Mexico tomorrow? What new term of endearment will Mr. Roosevelt apply to the pacifists upon his return from the West Indies? We are interested in the answers to these and several other questions affecting tomorrow. We would cultivate the acquaintance of Mr. Shuster.

Why Strut and Threaten?

Surely the war is getting the world nowhere. It is ruin and nothing more. Europe is a pathetic mess. That pacifists can see this to be true is no reason for calling them "cowards" or the "paid agents" of anybody. The duty of America is to stand squarely on the known principles of justice expressed in the law. The intrigue of no belligerent nation should draw us into the European butcher house. The honor of America is in the hands of America, and America only. No European nation can harm it. Liberty and freedom are still ours. Poise and judgment need not be sacrificed either to efficiency or to the ethics of little boys. Now is no time for America to strut and threaten.

The suggestion by Charles W. Eliot that it is time to express forcibly our convictions as to the side on which the right lies and "to make ready to take part in the terrible strife" is capable of a most sinister and dangerous interpretation. The question is not alone how we "can best bring direct help to harrassed and bleeding France and Great Britain." The question is how we can bring intelligent aid to the world. We have not lost our interest yet in the Central Powers. We have seen "military despotism" and "dangerous national ambitions" in countries other than Germany, and as for "the liberty-loving generations of the past and of the future," we cannot forget the influence upon Anglo-Saxon liberty of the German hearth and forest. In the language of Dr. Jordan: "The great nation of Germany is sound at heart, and it may become a real republic when, let us say, the United States has become a real democracy."

Europe is laughing at us? Never! Save it be in the maniacal cackle of a sad delirium. The United States is the money center of the world; its wealth is greater than any two nations of the world. The United States has a railway mileage greater than Europe, and motors twice those of Europe. Its iron and steel products are greater than those of any three nations, and it produces more copper than all the rest of the world. It operates more telephones and telegraphs than any two other nations. Its children are going to school. Its churches are intact and open. Its homes are filled with an industrious and for the most part a contented people. Its past is secure. Its present is a day of prosperity and achieve-

ment. Its future is radiant with the hopes of an aspiring race. The United States rests secure in the hands of a high-minded Executive, a forward-looking legislature, and a trusted judiciary. The paths of the United States are paths of pleasantness. On every hand we see that "the Lord loveth justice," and that "the work of righteousness shall be peace." Europe laughing at the United States? Not yet.

Mr. Ford and Pacifism.

Mr. Henry Ford has recently printed in the advertising columns of a number of newspapers and magazines of this country his views "Concerning Preparedness." Beginning with the statement that "The United States, I believe, is confronted by the greatest danger in history," and that, "Our danger is internal. We are confronted by the danger of militarism," it closes with these words:

"I am having this statement printed in the advertising columns of newspapers and magazines throughout the United States. Others will follow. I have no other purpose than to save America from bloodshed and its young men from conscription. I feel that if this militaristic burden is assumed by the country, the United States within ten years will be in turmoil, its industries paralyzed, and its men, instead of being at work in peaceful industry, will be dying in trenches. And I feel, too, that these men will not be dying to defend their country, as we are now being told, but will perish in the conquest of other men who have a right to live in happiness and peace."

In all the criticism of Mr. Ford there has been, so far as we have seen, no charge of insincerity against him. The quotation just cited is an exact expression of a genuine feeling. Mr. Ford is not only sincere, he is an intelligent man. He is in his own field one of the world's great men. He is studying the peace movement, and with an open mind. We may expect great things from him in the realm of those international adjustments which yet shall stop the iniquities of war.

POLICIES AND PISTOLS

By OSCAR T. CROSBY

FROM coast to coast the chorus sounds: "We shall arm only for defense against aggression." And in the minds of many thoughtless Americans that statement implies that we shall fight only to defend our own territory from attack. Yet, above all other nations, we must contemplate the possibility of being strategically on the "offensive."

The Monroe Doctrine *requires* that we should *attack* any power which may in action challenge its vague pronouncements. Can we prevent the conquest or the peaceful acquirement of any territory in South or Central America by staying at home?

What are the precise conditions under which we will combat any nation about the affairs of our younger sisters? Can we make a reasoned plan for our armaments by land or sea until we formulate the principles which we wish to defend?

In 1823, after a purely self-interested study of the situation, we declared to other powers, through President Monroe, that we would regard "any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety." The context shows that no other powers were referred to than the "allied powers" of that day. They had interfered to crush a rebellion in Spain. They re-established the old autocratic kingly power—that is, "the political system" whose extension to either of the American continents was to be resisted by us as "endangering our peace and happiness."

A far cry, indeed, from this original Monroe Doctrine to the Venezuela case. England has no such "political system" as that which Monroe condemned. She had at least a documentary claim to the contested territory. Yet we said substantially through Mr. Cleveland: "You shall not make good your claim by force of arms. You must arbitrate; otherwise we shall consider that you

are extending your territorial sovereignty in this hemisphere, which is not permissible." Thus we progressed from an interdiction of a political system which we considered dangerous to *any* extension of sovereignty.

We know that, currently, American opinion runs against even a *peaceful* acquirement of American territory by *any* European or Asiatic power. We have ourselves taken territory by war from Mexico and from Spain. Hence we cannot consistently declare that we meant to guarantee national boundaries. The "justice of our cause" presumably warranted these aggressions. Do we claim a monopoly of such aggressive action in the New World? Is it impossible to conceive of any other power being "justified" in taking over new sovereignty here—even with the consent of the State yielding it?

What, then, are the exact dimensions of this doctrine? Other important principles should be considered in any logical "preparedness." They will seriously affect the magnitude—yes, and even the types—of constructions aimed at given objectives. Thus, as to the Philippine Islands, their fate is not yet settled, even granting the passage of the Clarke amendment, because therein is an elastic clause which may reopen the whole question four years hence.

We may summarize some of the conditions to be determined before a thoroughly reasoned plan can be adopted, as follows:

Shall we resist any attempt of any foreign power to occupy, temporarily or permanently, by force or by consent, any South or Central American territory, or shall we not?

Are the Philippine Islands to be defended as if they were an integral part of our national territory, or not?

Shall we have a naval base (or bases) in the Philippine Islands, or not?

Shall we uphold the theory of closing neutral ports by belligerents, as practised in the present war, or not?

Shall the sale of munitions by neutrals to belligerents be recognized, or not?